



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Cape Cod National Seashore 99 Marconi Site Road
Wellfleet, MA 02667

508 349-3785 phone
508 349-9052 fax

Cape Cod National Seashore News Release

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Contact(s): *Sue Moynihan, Chief of Interpretation and Cultural Resources*

Phone number: *508 349- 3785 x 230*

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Reopening of Salt Pond Visitor Center Further Delayed

Acting Cape Cod National Seashore Superintendent Michael Murray has announced that the completion of the rehabilitation and the reopening of the park's primary visitor center in Eastham will be further delayed. The \$3 million dollar project has been underway since April of 2003. The initial schedule laid out by the National Park Service (NPS), was to have the project completed in one year and have the building closed to the public for only one summer. However, rehabilitation of the 14,000 square foot historic building has taken longer due to unanticipated structural and mechanical problems according to the NPS design and construction center in Denver, which is overseeing the project.

In February the current contractor, Shaw Beneco, Inc., will finish its contractual obligations with the NPS. The NPS will then complete the project and move back into the facility. The completion date is not known at this time, but facilities will likely reopen to the public in phases. The new comfort station and trailhead will likely open first. "These delays have been very disappointing and frustrating to the public who visit the seashore, park neighbors who use our facilities, and staff, who have been displaced for nearly two years," Murray said. "Our goal is to complete the work as expeditiously as possible to the quality we require to meet the needs and expectations of our visitors for a building that serves over one-half million visitors annually."

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The rehabilitation project accomplishes a number of goals. The building has been brought up to Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements; asbestos and lead paint have been removed; new electrical, plumbing, HVAC and fire suppression systems have been installed; there are new windows and interior finishes; and renovated offices, museum, meeting, and auditorium spaces. A major component is the addition of a new comfort station and an alternative septic system that greatly reduces nitrogen loading at Salt Pond.

Visitors continue to be served by a temporary visitor center in the parking area. Staff is available to assist with trip planning, and the park's education partner, Eastern National, has a well-stocked store with books, maps, puzzles, games, and other interpretive items. The center is open daily from 9 AM to 4:30 PM.

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